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ABSTRACT

A teacher education program for prospective secondary school English teachers is described. The program begins with the usual general education for two years, including a field experience working as a teacher aide in a public school and a human relations training program. The third and fourth years are devoted to major course work and professional training with progressive involvement in actual teaching experience in the public schools. The methods used to validate this program and evaluation results are included in this report. (JD)

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SECONDARY ENGLISH TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA ENTRY

1977 DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

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SUMMARY

The Secondary English Committee of the Department of Language Education at the University of Georgia has been responsible for developing this teacher-preparation program in English. By the 1971-72 school year we decided to respond to the competency-based teacher education movement and the increasingly frequent call for accountability. Perhaps more important was our growing dissatisfaction with the gap between teacher preparation and the realities of first-year teaching.

Formal planning began the following year with ideas and information being gathered from students, former students, other university faculty, personnel from Clarke County Public Schools, and the nine members of our committee. The resulting program proposal called for specific changes in course content preparatory to field center work, new and more stringent requirements for candidates, and an extension of involvement in public schools to two-thirds of a school year. In the spring of 1973, we operated a pilot project at Cedar Shoals High School in Athens. Based upon this initial operation, the first complete field sequence spanning six months was undertaken during the fall and winter of 1973-74. Another field center was opened that winter and spring in the same school system, while another one-quarter pilot operation began in Atlanta Public Schools. This development has continued to keep pace with expanding enrollments so that now we have four field centers.

During the field center sequence, candidates assume increasing responsibility as a teacher while receiving instruction in educational psychology, reading instruction, curriculum, and methods--all geared to the actual problems encountered in their work.

COMPREHENSIVE EXPLANATION

A. Description and Development of the Program. Besides both formal and informal on-campus meetings, we staged retreats of two or three days duration for brainstorming and intensive planning sessions. Rather than limiting ourselves by real or imagined obstacles, we concocted what we thought would be an ideal program. Then we set about fighting the political battles and enlisting the cooperation of all agencies touched.

The program itself begins with the usual general education for two years, including a field experience working as a teacher aide in a public school and a human relations training program. A major function of these experiences is screening, much of it self-screening by students, but also including evaluations by public school and College of Education personnel. The third and fourth years are devoted to major coursework and professional training. The minimum requirement in major is 50 quarter hours.

The concentrated professional training is called the Advanced Professional Education Sequence, or the APES. Students are selected on the basis of specified criteria:

Overall GPA of 2.5
Major GPA of 2.5
Completion of 7 major courses
Informal professional evaluations, done by instructors in each of the three pre-field courses

The GPA requirements were established by means of a two-year study of student teachers in our earlier program which did not impose this higher standard.

The APES itself is the field-center operation which lasts two quarters. During the first of these, the teacher-candidates (as they are now designated) are enrolled in courses in the teaching of reading

in secondary schools and educational psychology, both taught on-site in the public school by instructors from those departments. However, all this work is done under the coordination of the English education center coordinator, who also conducts the curriculum and methods seminar which lasts for both quarters. The teacher-candidates are engaged in some teaching during both quarters, with increasingly intensive involvement individually paced through five phases: (1) Clerical duties and observations, (2) Tutoring, (3) Small-group instruction plus occasional days with a total class, (4) Solo teaching with a full load, and (5) Optional peer teaching for the few very advanced candidates.

There is a comprehensive list of guidelines for operating field centers, but some of the most important guides are these: (1) All work is off campus, (2) The public school schedule of workdays is followed, (3) Teacher-candidates work with more than one experienced teacher, (4) Solo teaching must include some work in grades 8-10 and on a variety of ability levels.

B. Objectives and Goals. The overriding purpose was to provide the most practical, realistic, and complete preparation possible so that graduates would be more effective at the outset of their careers than is usually possible. Our apparent success has led other subject areas in our college to adapt features of our program and has brought considerable favorable national attention in English education. Another felt influence of our program has been the in-service effect on cooperating school systems.

A lengthy list of objectives to be attained by candidates was developed. These include specific content and professional objectives such as: (1) Evaluate and select literature for use in secondary schools in accordance with specified criteria, (2) Analyze independently a literary

work not previously studied, (3) Respond effectively to counter-productive student behaviors, (4) Analyze complex sentences using techniques and terminology of traditional, structural, and transformational-generative grammars, (5) Use several means of stimulating students to express themselves in a variety of media, etc.

Also, more general goals were set. Candidates were to have a positive concept of themselves and others, a realistic concept of high school students, and a knowledge of the organization, procedures, personnel, facilities, and community relationships of public school system.

Each goal and objective had at least one identified means of attainment and a specified means of evaluation.

C. Personnel Involved. Public school teachers participated in the planning from the outset as well as in each step of the implementation. Public school administrators were consulted as needed for clearance and were instrumental in overcoming various difficulties. Since faculty from two other university departments provide instruction in the field centers, they and their administrators provided vital cooperation. Students and former students of this department participated in the planning phase. The nine members of the Secondary English Committee were all involved in the planning and have participated in various aspects of the implementation.

D. Budget. No special allocations or grants have supported our program. We have, however, received generous "moral" support from our dean.

E. Contribution to the Improvement of Teacher Education. The response to the program has been overwhelmingly favorable. Graduates of the program rated its components higher than was the case of those who completed the former traditional program. Also, they have reported that their problems as first-year teachers were considerably less than for other

first-year teachers in their schools. This has been borne out by employing principals who have asked for more of our graduates. The most dramatic evidence is the virtual 100% placement success for our graduates when there is a teacher surplus in our field. Evidence of student response is our 64% enrollment increase this year over last year.

Public school teachers have been most enthusiastic, as seen by their continued voluntary participation. Even some of those who initally chose not to participate are volunteering. Also, teachers in other systems have solicited our developing centers in their schools. Teachers and administrators have found the services of the candidates and their instructors beneficial to secondary school students through the increased opportunity for tutoring, team teaching, and implementation of curricular innovations.

F. Evaluation Methods and Results. The design for evaluating the program included two major components: (1) Measures taken during and at the end of its operation and (2) Measures taken after candidates had been in a regular teaching job for a year.

Attainment of the specific goals and objectives was measured by a variety of instruments: the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory, the Fundamental Interpersonal Relation Orientation-Behavior, the T-C Progress Report Form, the Department English Education Test, the Inventory of Student Perception of Instruction, and the Rating of Major and Professional Courses In English Education. The measurements covered the specific objectives included in our complete listing mentioned on page 4. The data were subject to analyses as indicated in the summary on the next page.

In the three-part follow-up evaluation of first-year teachers who had completed the program, the researcher visited each first-year teacher

Summary of Test Analyses

Null Hypothesis	Instrument	Analysis
1. There will be no significant difference between pre- and post-test scores of the teacher candidate's attitude toward teaching and children.	Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory	t test (for dependent samples)
2. There will be no significant difference between pre- and post-test scores of the teacher candidate's attitude toward himself and his relationships with others.	FIRO-B	t tests (for dependent samples)
3. There will be no significant difference between preliminary, mid-term, and final performance observation ratings.	T-C Progress Reports	paired t tests (for dependent samples)
4. Correct responses on the English knowledge test will not be greater than incorrect responses.	Departmental English Education Test	50% criterion
5. Favorable responses in the six aspects of classroom instruction on the pupil rating will not be greater than unfavorable responses.	Inventory of Student Perception of Instruction	$\bar{x}$ score of 2.5 criteria

in the schools to evaluate the teacher's performance. The T-C Observation form was used for each observation. The other two parts were questionnaires: One a self-evaluation form in which the first-year teacher was asked to indicate a degree of agreement or disagreement that an item was an accurate description of the classroom activities or attitudes, the other a questionnaire containing similar items for the principal or department head.

Conclusions based on the results of analyses of the data include:

1. Pupils rated their teacher candidates competent in instructional objectives and resources, motivation and human relations, and measurement and evaluation.

2. Graduates from the field center program were competent first-year teachers.

3. Teacher candidates showed growth in leadership ability at the end of the program.

4. The teachers showed growth in their teaching performance in the areas of preteaching preparation, learning activities, classroom management, and overall performance during student teaching, as rated by their supervisors.

5. All of the teacher candidates demonstrated mastery of the English education course objectives.

6. Graduates of the field center program tended to rate higher the content of their courses and the quality of instruction they received than the graduates of the traditional, non-field center program.

7. There were significant relationships among sections of the various instruments, among the predictor measures, among the criterion measures, and between some of the predictor and criterion measures. However, the correlations were not high enough to justify any single measure as a predictor or criterion measure.

As any program must be, ours is shaped to fit a particular set of circumstances. Another place probably could not precisely replicate our program; however, there are many features which could be incorporated elsewhere. Indeed, adaptations of our program's features should not be too difficult to arrive at in fitting a new situation.

The success of any program which simulates this one will be largely contingent upon professional committment and effective human relations. It is not just a simple matter of revising courses or installing new offerings. It requires a major shift in the professional functioning of all involved. A steady, long-term committment is vital on the part of university and public school personnel.